

Aug 28, 1986

Barbara J. Zellmer, Unit Leader  
Hazardous Waste Regulatory Unit  
Hazardous Waste Management Section  
Bureau of Solid Waste Management  
Department of Natural Resources  
State of Wisconsin  
Box 7921  
Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Dear Ms. Zellmer:

Thank you for your letter of July 2, 1986 concerning solvent laden cleaning rags.

The method that you outlined for determining the hazardousness of solvent-rag mixtures is an accurate reflection of our current regulations. The Agency is presently considering a petition from the Kimberly-Clark Corporation which asks us to exempt solvent-contaminated, disposable industrial wipers from hazardous waste status under the mixture rule. In our response to their petition, we hope to deal with the entire "rag" issue in a more comprehensive and coherent fashion.

With respect to your question on treatment, it is unlikely that solvent evaporation during accumulation would fall under the §262.34 permitting exemption since one of the conditions for this exemption is that the containers remain closed during storage, except to add or remove waste (§265.173 (a)).

If you have any additional questions on the solvent-rag issue, please feel free to contact Bob Axelrad, of my staff, at (202) 382-4761.

Sincerely,

Marcia E. Williams  
Director  
Office of Solid Waste

Faxback 11176

State of Wisconsin/  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES

*Carroll D. Besadny Secretary*

July 2, 1986

Ms. Marcia Williams  
WH 562-B  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
401 M Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Williams:

In a recent conversation with Bob Scarberry, he suggested that we write to you for assistance with RCRA regulatory interpretation. We would like to request a regulatory interpretation letter on the following hazardous waste management issue.

We have received many requests for clarification on whether or not a specific printing industry waste, solvent-laden cleaning rags, is a hazardous waste. We received an interpretation from the RCRA hotline and would like formal verification of this information.

According to the RCRA hotline, the method by which cleaning solvents and rags are "mixed" is important in determining if and why the solvent-rag mixture is a hazardous waste. If a "listed" solvent product is applied to the rag and then the solvent-rag mixture is used to clean printing equipment, the resultant solvent-rag mixture would be a hazardous waste only if it exhibited a hazardous characteristic. On the other hand, if a listed solvent product is first applied to the equipment and then the rag is used to clean the equipment, the resultant solvent rag mixture would be a listed hazardous waste. In the first situation, the solvent product was mixed with or added to the rag and in the second situation, a listed spent solvent waste is mixed with or added to the rag.

If a nonlisted solvent product is first applied to either the equipment or the rag, the resultant solvent rag mixture may be a hazardous waste if it exhibits a hazardous characteristic. A question arises when a solvent-rag mixture, exhibiting a hazardous characteristic, such as ignitability, is allowed to evaporate during accumulation.

Can this be considered a form of hazardous waste treatment exempt from licensing under the recent interpretation in 51 FR 10168?

We would appreciate your comments on this subject. Please feel free to call Terry Brasino at (608) 266-7596 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Zellmer, Unit Leader  
Hazardous Waste Regulatory Unit  
Hazardous Waste Management Section  
Bureau of Solid Waste Management

cc: Terry Brasino SW/3  
Catherine Hay - SED  
Linda Lynch - SW/3